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Resources drive investment in WA: ABS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) latest snapshot of Western Australia shows that while WA is benefiting from a strong resources sector, the rapid expansion has placed pressure on the state's energy and water resources.

Expenditure on research and experimental development in WA rose 57.4% between 2002-03 and 2004-05, almost three times the rate of growth of the state economy (19.5%).

The major driver of this growth has been the mining industry, increasing its R&D by 130% ($255 million). Of this, metal ore mining R&D went up by $134 million, and oil and gas extraction R&D was up by $64 million.

Water and energy resources stretched

Western Australia's rapidly expanding population and economy has increased demand on the state's energy, however many households are finding ways to reduce water usage.

The proportion of Perth households using air conditioning has risen from 40% in 1992 to 74% in 2006; and solar hot water heating use has fallen from 24% in 1992 to 14% in 2006.

Meanwhile water saving appliances in WA homes are becoming more common, with the proportion of Perth households using dual flush toilets rising from 36% in 1992 to 84% in 2006, and usage of water efficient shower heads has increased from 21% in 1992 to 51% in 2006.

Community support

A feature article in today's release of *Western Australian Statistical* Indicators stated just over half (56%) of WA's adults felt that they could trust 'most people', with people most likely to trust doctors (88%) and local police (75%). The article also looked at family support and volunteering.

More information can be found in *Western Australian Statistical Indicators* (cat. no. 1367.5).

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